

AMENDED CLAIMS

[Received by the International Office on 30 May 2000 (30.05.00); claims 1 to 29 replaced with amended claims 1 to 29 (6 pages)]

- 5 1. A process for the treatment of at least one thin
brittle metal strip (1, 21a, 21b, 30) having a
thickness of less than 0.1 mm, comprising at least
one step in which the thin strip (1, 21a, 21b,
21c, 30) is subjected to stresses, characterized
10 in that, prior to the step of the process in which
the thin strip (1, 21a, 21b, 21c, 30) is subjected
to stresses, at least one side of the strip is
covered with a coating layer (3, 3', 13, 13', 31)
made of at least one polymer film so as to obtain,
15 on the strip, an adhesive layer having a thickness
of between 1 and 100 μ m, modifying the deformation
and fracture properties of the thin metal strip,
and in that the step of the process in which the
thin strip is subjected to stresses is carried out
20 on the strip covered with the coating layer.
2. The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized
in that the coating layer (3, 3') made of at least
one polymer film consists of a self-adhering
25 plastic film precoated with adhesive.
3. The process as claimed in claim 2, characterized
in that the self-adhering plastic film precoated
30 with adhesive comprises a layer of a pressure-
sensitive self-adhering substance and in that the
self-adhering coating layer (3, 3') is made to
adhere to the thin metal strip (1) by pressing the
coating layer (3, 3') onto the thin metal strip
(1).
- 35 4. The process as claimed in either of claims 2
and 3, characterized in that the plastic film

consists of one of the following materials: polyester, polytetrafluoroethylene, polyimide.

5. The process as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 4, characterized in that one side of the thin brittle metal strip (1) is brought into contact with a first self-adhering polymer film (3), the nanocrystalline strip (1) thus being able to be handled, in that the second side of the thin brittle metal strip (1) is brought into contact with a second film (3') made of a self-adhering plastic, in that pressure is applied to the laminated strip (6) consisting of the thin brittle metal strip (1) between the two films of polymer material (3, 3') and in that a mechanical operation, for example a cutting operation, is carried out on the laminated strip (6).
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6. The process as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 4, characterized in that a plurality of laminated strips (6, 7a, 7b, 7c) each having a coating layer consisting of a plastic film precoated with a pressure-sensitive adhesive on at least one of its sides are produced, in that the plurality of laminated strips (6, 7a, 7b, 7c) are superposed and joined together by adhesion in order to obtain a laminated composite strip (11) and in that a mechanical operation, for example a cutting operation, is carried out on the laminated composite strip (11).
7. The process as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 6, characterized in that the pressure-sensitive adhesive substance of the self-adhering plastic film precoated with adhesive is a crosslinkable substance and in that a crosslinking heat treatment is carried out on the coating layer adhering to the thin metal strip.

- 5 8. The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized
 in that the coating layer comprising at least one
 polymer film consists of a thermoplastic non-self-
 adhering polymer film precoated with adhesive on
 one of its faces, in that such a thermoplastic
 film precoated with adhesive is brought into
 contact with at least one of the sides of the thin
 metal strip (1) in order to obtain a laminated
 strip (7a, 7b, 7c), in that a plurality of
 laminated strips (7a, 7b, 7c) are manufactured in
 this way, in that the plurality of laminated
 strips (7a, 7b, 7c) are heated to a temperature of
 less than 400°C, in that the strips of the
 plurality of laminated strips (7a, 7b, 7c) heated
 to obtain a composite laminated strip (11) are
 superimposed and compressed one against another,
 and in that a process step involving stresses,
 such as a cutting operation, is carried out on the
 composite laminated strip (11).
- 10 9. The process as claimed in claim 8, characterized
 in that the thermoplastic film is made of one of
 the following polymer materials: polyethylene
 modified by acrylic acid or maleic anhydride;
 grafted polypropylene; polyamide; polyurethane
- 15 10. The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized
 in that the coating layer comprising at least one
 polymer film consists of a reactive adhesive
 polymer material, in that the coating layer is
 deposited on at least one of the sides of the thin
 brittle metal strip (1), in order to obtain a
 laminated strip (16), in that a plurality of
 laminated strips (16a, 16b, 16c) is produced in
 this way, in that the laminated strips (16a, 16b,
 16c) are heated to a temperature of less than
 400°C, in that the laminated strips (16a, 16b,

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